

EXHIBIT 10



Deposition of:
Brandy Welch

May 24, 2021

In the Matter of:
**Rogers, Eden, et al v. U.S. Dept. of
Health and Hu**

Veritext Legal Solutions

800.743.DEPO (3376) | Calendar-carolinas@veritext.com |
www.veritext.com

Brandy Welch
Rogers, Eden, et al v. U.S. Dept. of Health and Hu

May 24, 2021

Page 1

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
GREENVILLE DIVISION

Eden Rogers, et al.,
Plaintiffs,

vs.

United States Department of Health and Human
Services, et al.,

Defendant.

VIRTUAL

DEPOSITION OF: BRANDY WELCH

DATE: May 24, 2021

TIME: 9:04 a.m.

LOCATION:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

TAKEN BY: Counsel for Governor Henry McMaster

REPORTED BY: MICHELLE BAKER LEE,
Certified Court Reporter

1 APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL:

2 ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFFS:

3 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF
4 SOUTH CAROLINA FOUNDATION5 Susan K. Dunn, Esquire (via VTC)
6 P.O. Box 20998
Charleston, South Carolina 29413-0998
843-720-1423
sdunn@aclusc.org

7 and

8 LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND, INC.
M. Currey Cook, Esquire (via VTC)
120 Wall Street, Floor 19
New York, NY 10005-3919
212-809-8585
ccook@lambdalegal.org

10 and

11 CRAVATH SWAINE & MOORE, LLP
Katherine Deringer Janson, Esquire (via VTC)
825 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10019
212-474-1459
kjanson@cravath.com

14 ATTORNEY FOR FEDERAL DEFENDANTS:

15 UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
Christie V. Newman, Esquire (via VTC)
16 1441 Main Street, Suite 500
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
803-929-3030
christie.newman@usdoj.gov

18 ATTORNEY FOR DEFENDANT HENRY MCMASTER:

19 NELSON MULLINS RILEY & SCARBOROUGH, LLP
20 Miles E. Coleman, Esquire (via VTC)
2 West Washington Street, Fourth Floor
21 Greenville, South Carolina 29601
864-373-2352
miles.coleman@nelsonmullins.com

1 APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL (Continued):

2
3 ATTORNEY FOR DEFENDANT MICHAEL LEACH:

4 DAVIDSON WREN & DEMASTERS, PA

Jonathan M. Riddle, Esquire (via VTC)

5 1611 Devonshire Drive, Second Floor

Columbia, South Carolina 29204

6 803-806-8222

jriddle@dml-law.com

7
8
9
10 (INDEX AT REAR OF TRANSCRIPT)

1 injury by working with DSS instead of Miracle Hill, is
2 it?

3 A I don't think that DSS is working with the
4 general public as far as I know. I thought they were
5 doing like just like -- what's it called when they
6 work with just families? Like kinship foster care is
7 what I thought. And also I believe that they're --
8 from what I understood at the time that they were,
9 like, a long, long wait to -- to be able to help DSS.
10 So our understanding was that you could -- you could
11 help faster going with a big agency like Miracle Hill.

12 Q Let me ask a couple follow-ups just to make
13 sure that I understand what you were saying.

14 So at the time you filed -- well, at the
15 time you applied to Miracle Hill back in, I think it
16 was, the end of April 2019, you -- you're saying now
17 you didn't realize at that time that you could work
18 directly with South Carolina DSS?

19 A Well, I knew that we could but I had heard
20 that it would take a long time to be able to go
21 through DSS and be able to start helping children.

22 Q Okay. Where did you hear that?

23 A Just general conversation with people that
24 we know.

25 Q Okay. And so I guess my question, then, is

1 if it turns out that was incorrect, if it turns out
2 those people were mistaken and DSS was just as fast as
3 Miracle Hill then it wasn't any disadvantage, it
4 wouldn't have been any disadvantage to work with DSS
5 instead of Miracle will, would it?

6 A Well, I believe that Miracle Hill provides
7 additional services that are helpful for prospective
8 foster parents. So, like, we wanted to go with the
9 biggest agency in our area.

10 Q Okay. So, yeah, I guess there's -- I guess
11 there's two things there that you felt like you
12 were -- you would have been missing out on. There was
13 the speed or the length of time it could take to get
14 licensed, and the I guess -- I don't remember the
15 exact phrase you used but, in general, the -- for the
16 services or the types of support available?

17 A Right.

18 Q Let's stick with that first one for a
19 second, though, the length of time it takes to get
20 licensed.

21 If it turns out that DSS or other private
22 agencies could get you licensed by the state --
23 because everybody has to be licensed by the state.
24 They're the only ones who can grant the license. So
25 if it turns out that DSS or another private agency

1 could have gotten you licensed as fast as Miracle Hill
2 could have done it, then working with DSS or another
3 private agency as far as length of time goes, working
4 with DSS or another private agency wouldn't have been
5 any disadvantage to you, would it?

6 A Well, the problem with that is that there's
7 a huge number of kids that are with Miracle Hill that
8 need foster homes. It's advertised regularly on the
9 radio and it was at the time at least around here. I
10 don't really listen to the radio much now because we
11 don't drive very much because we work from home.

12 Q Sure.

13 A But previously it was on the radio about how
14 many homes they needed. So that was like -- you know,
15 we were hearing it all the time that they needed so
16 many foster parents, so that was our go-to. Like
17 that's who we knew of and that's who we went with.

18 Q Do you know whether DSS also has an even
19 larger number of kids in its care that need foster
20 homes?

21 A I do not.

22 Q Do you know if anywhere maybe in your
23 Complaint it says that?

24 A I do not.

25 Q So let me go back again, though, because I'm

1 still trying to figure out this piece about the length
2 of time.

3 If DSS or another private agency could have
4 gotten you from application to licensure as fast or
5 even faster than Miracle Hill then there's no time
6 disadvantage, there's no speed disadvantage to working
7 with DSS or another agency, is there?

8 A I don't know. Could they have done it as
9 fast?

10 Q Well, I don't know. We haven't gotten to
11 talk to DSS yet. We'll -- there'll be a deposition of
12 DSS folks coming up and we'll be able to find out what
13 they think.

14 But I guess what I'm asking is in the sense
15 of a question, if -- and we'll find out -- if DSS or
16 another private agency could get you from application
17 through licensure as fast or faster than Miracle Hill
18 could have done it then there's no disadvantage to you
19 to working with DSS or another private agency, is
20 there?

21 A Well, there is still a disadvantage because
22 of the services they're offering by Miracle Hill.

23 Q And we'll -- yeah, we'll definitely talk
24 about that.

25 A So you're -- but you're saying there's no

1 disadvantage. There is --

2 Q Okay.

3 A -- in my opinion.

4 Q I'll rephrase it a little bit more narrowly.

5 A Okay.

6 Q If it turns out that DSS or another private
7 agency could get you from application through
8 licensure as a foster family, a foster parent just as
9 fast or faster than Miracle Hill could have done it
10 then from a length of time standpoint there is no
11 disadvantage to working with DSS or another private
12 agency, is there?

13 A I don't know. I mean, it really depends on
14 if they could have done it as fast. But it seems
15 irrelevant to me because that's -- that's not who we
16 applied with and Miracle Hill is known to be the
17 largest agency in the state.

18 Q Right. And so let me ask the question
19 again, though, because your job is to answer the
20 questions here in a deposition, not to decide if you
21 think it's relevant or not. And I'm still just trying
22 to get an answer to this. Let me try to phrase it a
23 different way.

24 In your Complaint you said that one of the
25 disadvantages you suffered by not being able to work

1 Twitter?

2 A I mean, in the last month, zero times. I
3 used to look at it, I'd say, maybe like once a month,
4 maybe like -- yeah, not very often.

5 Q How often do you think you post on Twitter?

6 A It's been a long time. Not often at all.

7 Q Okay. Did you used to be more of an active
8 user?

9 A I've never really been extremely active. I
10 used to maybe, like, share stuff that people I
11 followed, like, posted, but I didn't really write my
12 own posts very often.

13 Q Who -- like what kind of stuff and whose
14 posts would you share?

15 A I don't recall offhand.

16 Q Okay. Have you ever -- on Twitter since
17 applying to Miracle Hill till now, have you ever
18 removed, deleted, or taken down anything related to
19 fostering, foster care, Miracle Hill, or the lawsuit?

20 A No.

21 Q Eden doesn't have a Twitter account, does
22 she?

23 A I don't think so.

24 Q Do you remember seeing in January, February,
25 March of 2019 -- so this would be the couple of months

1 leading up to the time you applied to Miracle Hill.
2 Do you remember seeing -- well, let me ask it this
3 way, to back up. On Twitter do you follow the ACLU or
4 Lambda Legal or organizations like that?

5 A I know I follow Lambda Legal. I don't know
6 about ACLU for sure.

7 Q Okay. So do you happen to remember back in
8 the first couple of months of 2019 before you applied
9 to Miracle Hill seeing tweets from ACLU, Equality SC,
10 and Lambda talking about how they are looking for
11 people who have applied to Miracle Hill and been
12 turned away; did you ever see any of those?

13 A No, I didn't follow any of them at that
14 time.

15 Q Okay. When did you start following them?

16 A I would assume that I started following
17 Lambda at some point after we filed the case.

18 Q Okay. But you don't remember for sure?

19 A No, I don't.

20 Q Okay. You and -- you and Eden live with two
21 daughters; is that right?

22 A We have two children, yes.

23 Q And those are her biological daughters from
24 a prior marriage, right?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Do you have any children, biological
2 children, of your own?

3 A No.

4 Q Do you have any children other than those
5 two?

6 A No.

7 Q And are -- have you adopted them or you
8 consider them to be children but have not sort of gone
9 through the legal process?

10 A No, because they have a dad so --

11 Q Okay.

12 A Yeah.

13 Q So you are -- I guess you're sort of like a
14 parent figure but in a technical legal sense not a
15 parent of them; is that right?

16 A Correct. Sure.

17 Q And where do y'all live?

18 A [REDACTED]

19 Q Okay. Where at? What's your address?

20 A [REDACTED].

21 Q Okay. And I think you-all moved there not
22 too long ago, right?

23 A In October.

24 Q Prior to that you were at a house in Taylors
25 that you rented?

1 A Correct.

2 Q Okay. And prior to that a couple -- or I
3 think there were a couple of moves once you came to
4 South Carolina before you got to where you're at now.
5 And you own the house you're at now, right?

6 A That's correct.

7 Q Are you taking any medications that could
8 affect or give you any difficulty with your memory
9 today?

10 A No.

11 Q Anything else? Have a sleepless night or
12 anything like that that might affect your ability to
13 remember accurately and testify truthfully today?

14 A No.

15 Q Are you taking any prescription medications?

16 A Yes.

17 Q I think the audio cut out there. I
18 couldn't --

19 A Oh. Yes, I am.

20 Q Okay. What?

21 A You want the full list?

22 Q Sure.

23 A Okay.

24 Q Well, again, I -- let's start on it and
25 depending on how long it goes, I reserve the right to

1 Q Have you ever -- let's say that sort of --
2 that same period of time, let's say the last ten
3 years, have you seen any counselors or therapists?

4 A Yeah. Eden and I went to counseling for --
5 this was a few months before we got married.

6 Q Okay. And what kind of counseling was it?
7 Was it like pre-marriage counseling?

8 A Well, I mean, that's what we were using it
9 for. It was just a regular, like, counselor that we
10 went to see to make sure that like -- like we were --
11 not that we were ready to be married because we were
12 definitely ready but just to work through some, like,
13 communication practicing. Like she worked through,
14 like, conflict resolution and it was basically just
15 some relationship counseling and stuff.

16 Q Okay. Where was that?

17 A I don't recall. It was here in Greenville
18 but I don't recall what --

19 Q That's fine. I don't need the name.

20 A Okay. Yeah.

21 Q So that would have been in 2015, early 2015,
22 sounds like?

23 A Yeah, yeah.

24 Q Anything since then; have you seen a
25 counselor or therapist for anything?

1 A No, I haven't.

2 Q How did you decide to file this lawsuit?

3 A Eden and I had had a long talk about, like,
4 how we felt afterwards. And I think, like, honestly
5 for me it was I had never been discriminated against
6 or felt discriminated against in any way basically my
7 whole life. And I think that that feeling that
8 happened from that like -- and realizing that it's
9 such a marginalized group of people that are even
10 allowed to use Miracle Hill kind of brought us to that
11 conclusion.

12 Q When you and Eden lived together as a couple
13 in Georgia, you couldn't get married, could you?

14 A No, we couldn't get married anywhere. I
15 think when we first lived together -- well, maybe, we
16 could have. We could have somewhere, yeah. But, no,
17 we couldn't get married.

18 Q Not in Georgia, at least?

19 A Right, yeah, that's true.

20 Q And you didn't feel like that was being
21 discriminated against?

22 A Sure. I mean, yeah.

23 Q Okay. That discrimination, though, didn't
24 stop you from moving to South Carolina where you could
25 get married and getting married, right?

1 A Right. I mean, we didn't move to South
2 Carolina so we could get married, though, but, yeah.

3 Q But when you got here you took advantage of
4 the chance to get married?

5 A Sure. Yeah, I mean, you could get married
6 anywhere by the time we lived here.

7 Q So you moved here before the decision in
8 Obergefell, right? You moved to South Carolina in --

9 A Well, we didn't get married until after that
10 decision, though.

11 Q Okay.

12 A I don't know -- I don't know timing-wise
13 when we -- if we moved here before or after, but we
14 didn't get married until after.

15 Q What was the -- what's your anniversary date
16 or the date of your wedding?

17 A November 11, 2015 -- or November 28th -- I'm
18 sorry -- 2015. Don't tell Eden.

19 Q Unfortunately, this is now part of the
20 record.

21 A Awesome.

22 Q The good news is let the record reflect you
23 caught your mistake very quickly and it was just a
24 slip of the tongue.

25 But I guess my point was the fact that you'd

1 been denied the ability to get married by Georgia
2 didn't leave you so scared and afraid that you never
3 got married, did it?

4 A No, we weren't -- I mean, we weren't trying
5 to get married yet when we lived in Georgia. Like, so
6 it didn't -- we weren't like -- I mean, obviously we
7 had plans to get married at some point but that wasn't
8 where we were at at that point so --

9 Q And obviously you didn't go down to the
10 clerk of court in Georgia, ask for a marriage
11 certificate and get told no?

12 A Right. I mean, we weren't even in the
13 planning stages of getting married yet.

14 Q You weren't literally denied but you --

15 A Correct.

16 Q A better way to phrase it is the fact that
17 you could not have been, the state of Georgia at that
18 time wouldn't, didn't think you should be allowed to
19 get married, correct?

20 A Yes.

21 Q But when the opportunity became available,
22 you took it?

23 A Once we were ready to get -- I mean, we were
24 ready to get married, not because it was an
25 opportunity to take.

1 Q Yeah. I'll phrase it a little bit
2 differently. Subsequently when you were ready to get
3 married and you could, you did?

4 A Yes.

5 Q So I guess my question is this: You applied
6 to Miracle Hill and they referred you either to DSS or
7 to, I think, eight other private agencies. You didn't
8 call any of those other agencies, did you?

9 A No.

10 Q And you didn't even look at their websites
11 to see if they would work with you, did you?

12 A No.

13 Q And you know that Lisa and Cindy
14 Bovee-Kemper, a same-sex married couple who couldn't
15 work with Miracle Hill, they got licensed as foster
16 parents in South Carolina through some agency, right?

17 A Yes. I don't -- I don't know when they did
18 that, though, but, yeah.

19 Q But at some point in between 2017 and now,
20 they did?

21 A Right, that's correct.

22 Q And you want to be a foster parent, right?

23 A Yes.

24 Q So why, knowing that there is an opportunity
25 and availability to be licensed as a foster parent,

1 Why don't we go off the record. Let's take maybe
2 a ten-minute break. I think that would be ample
3 for me to be ready to go again, and we can come
4 back on in about ten minutes.

5 I'll just remind you, even though we're off
6 the record you're still under oath and the
7 deposition is still open. So anyone or anything
8 that you talk about or do during the next ten
9 minutes I can still ask you about and you have to
10 tell me. Once we come back on the record you're
11 still under oath and you still have to keep
12 testifying truthfully. Sound good?

13 THE WITNESS: Yep, sounds good.

14 MR. COLEMAN: Let's go off at 10:07. We'll
15 be back at 10:17.

16 (Break taken from 10:07 a.m. to 10:18 a.m.)

17 MR. COLEMAN: All right. So we're back on
18 the record at 10:18.

19 BY MR. COLEMAN:

20 Q I think we're -- I think the end is in
21 sight. I won't keep you here all morning much less
22 all day, but I do have a couple of -- a couple more to
23 ask.

24 When we talked a little bit earlier, I asked
25 you about how you decided -- after receiving the

1 e-mail from Miracle Hill in response to your
2 application, I asked you how you decided to file the
3 lawsuit and you talked a little bit about that. Who
4 did you talk to as you were wrestling through that
5 process?

6 A Eden.

7 Q Anybody else?

8 A That day, no, just Eden and I. Like, I
9 mean, we talked about it, like about making the
10 decision, like, between the two of us.

11 Q The decision of whether you wanted to
12 proceed with filing a lawsuit?

13 A Yeah.

14 Q How --

15 A Well, I mean, I don't know if we knew that
16 it was going to be a lawsuit yet but -- but with
17 talking to Currey.

18 Q Okay. And don't tell me any conversations
19 you had with Currey or other lawyers. That's all
20 confidential stuff but --

21 A Okay.

22 Q -- I guess I'm kind of just trying to sort
23 of get a sense of -- so you got the e-mail back from
24 Miracle Hill. And so the first conversations you were
25 having with Eden were -- you said it wasn't

1 necessarily about a lawsuit at that point. I guess
2 what were you talking through?

3 A I mean, we talked about how it felt, like,
4 to get that e-mail. I think, like, I've never -- I
5 guess, like, I've always felt fairly privileged. I
6 don't think I realized it until this happened that --
7 I don't know, being white and middle class in the US
8 like, you know, I haven't really faced much
9 discrimination, even as being gay for as many years as
10 I have been gay really hadn't run into any issues.

11 But I think it was -- I mean, I instantly,
12 like, felt really sick to my stomach and upset like
13 because it had never happened and I know what kind of
14 parents we are, and I guess I just didn't see it going
15 that way like -- so, yeah, like, we talked about how
16 that felt and what we felt like we should do.

17 Q Okay. Whose idea was it, then, to file a
18 lawsuit?

19 A I mean, it was -- it came to that like
20 having the discussion with Eden and I and Currey.

21 Q Okay. And, again, I don't -- I'm not trying
22 to ask a conversation that you had with --

23 A Sure.

24 Q But was it -- was it your idea or Eden's
25 idea like -- that you came up with it like we could

1 sue?

2 A I mean, we, like, just mutually talked about
3 it. I mean, it wasn't like her idea or my idea.
4 We -- it was a mutual decision that we needed to do
5 something to try and change this so we decided
6 together.

7 Q Okay. But it was between the two of you
8 sort of jointly that the idea of filing a lawsuit had
9 its origination; is that right?

10 A Well, I mean, yeah, yeah. Well, I mean,
11 we -- like, we talked about what our options would be
12 and obviously a lawsuit is one of those options. And
13 so, yeah, but that idea originated with us, yes.

14 Q Did you talk to Cindy or Lisa Bovee-Kemper
15 about it?

16 A Before or after?

17 Q Well, let's start with before sending in the
18 application. Did they know you were applying to
19 Miracle Hill?

20 A Yeah, they knew we were applying to Miracle
21 Hill.

22 Q And did they encourage you to do that?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Okay. And they didn't tell you that -- that
25 they knew that Miracle Hill wouldn't work with

1 Unitarian Universalists or same-sex couples?

2 A No. Like they -- like they're the ones who
3 introduced us to Currey so we -- I think we knew that
4 there was a chance, but, like, honestly I still didn't
5 feel like that was ever going to happen just because I
6 know us as parents and I guess I never had really
7 faced a whole lot of rejection in my life. So, like,
8 I think I knew it was a possibility but I didn't know
9 it was guaranteed by any means.

10 Q When did they introduce you to Currey?

11 A I don't recall.

12 Q Was it before you applied to Miracle Hill or
13 after?

14 A It was before.

15 Q And had you talked to -- talked on the phone
16 or e-mails with Currey before applying?

17 A I believe Eden did. I don't think that -- I
18 don't recall talking to him beforehand but I think
19 that Eden did.

20 Q Okay.

21 A I may have. I just don't recall for sure.

22 Q Okay. Was Currey your first point of
23 contact to the people that eventually became your
24 lawyers?

25 A Yes.

1 bullet-point list. I think it was nine other groups.
2 That e-mail never said anything about sexual
3 orientation, did it?

4 A No, it did not.

5 Q Or same-sex marriage?

6 A No, it did not.

7 Q What is your sexual orientation?

8 A Lesbian.

9 Q And you said something earlier this morning.
10 I don't remember exactly what it was. But you said
11 something to the effect of that you hadn't experienced
12 a lot of difficulty, you led sort of a privileged
13 American upper middle-class lifestyle, and I think you
14 said even after -- even after identified as a gay or
15 lesbian person, which made we wonder, like, at what
16 point -- at what point did you identify as being
17 lesbian?

18 A Maybe 1998 I think is -- yeah, yeah, that's
19 about -- around that time frame.

20 Q And give me a ballpark. Like how old were
21 you at the time?

22 A Oh, probably 19 or 20.

23 Q Okay. I just wasn't sure from your previous
24 answer if there had been a period of life where you
25 did not identify as LGBTQ and then a later period of

1 life when you did and sort of when that happened
2 generally. So around kind of college age, it sounds
3 like?

4 A (Indiscernible audio.)

5 Q Your audio cut out again.

6 A Yes. Can you hear me?

7 Q I can now.

8 MR. COLEMAN: I think those are all the
9 questions I have for right now, though as all
10 lawyers do in all (indiscernible audio), I
11 reserve the right to ask a few more after -- and
12 I think of some more after the other lawyers have
13 their say. So I'm going to stop for now.
14 Christie may have some questions, Jonathan may
15 have some questions, Susan may have some
16 questions, and you'll answer those. If I have
17 any follow-ups, I'll ask them then.

18 MS. NEWMAN: Okay. Thank you. This is
19 Christie. I have no questions.

20 MR. RIDDLE: This is Jonathan. I also have
21 no questions.

22 MS. DUNN: And I'd like to take just a brief
23 break to check in with my colleagues and then
24 come back. Can we do that?

25 MR. COLEMAN: What do you think, five

1 minutes? Ten?

2 MS. DUNN: Yeah, I think that's fine.

3 MR. COLEMAN: Five minutes?

4 MS. DUNN: Yeah.

5 MR. COLEMAN: Be back at 10:53-ish?

6 MS. DUNN: Okay. Actually, give me ten.

7 MR. COLEMAN: All right. We'll call it ten.

8 MS. DUNN: Okay. We'll be back then.

9 (Break taken from 10:48 a.m. to 10:58 a.m.)

10 EXAMINATION

11 BY MS. DUNN:

12 Q Brandy, just a few questions. How did it
13 make you feel to know that your state government was
14 seeking permission to allow Child Placing Agencies to
15 discriminate against people like you?

16 A It makes me feel like disgusted or really
17 upset because, yeah, I mean, it's -- it's a horrible
18 feeling to feel like people like me -- and by people
19 like me I mean loving parents who already have two
20 children, who are phenomenal humans, aren't given the
21 opportunity to bring children to our house and be able
22 to help them in a way that we would love to be able to
23 do.

24 Q And, Brandy, when a child is placed in
25 foster care, is it your understanding that it's the

1 state that is responsible for their care, that they're
2 in the custody of the state?

3 A Yes.

4 Q And so that if Miracle Hill is providing
5 services for foster children, they're doing it because
6 it's a government function that they're taking over?

7 A Right.

8 Q And when you received the e-mail from
9 Miracle Hill, was your understanding that that e-mail
10 meant that Miracle Hill would not consider your
11 ability to parent?

12 A Yes.

13 Q And that Miracle Hill, based upon the
14 information on a simple online filing, decided you
15 were not Christian?

16 A Yes.

17 MS. DUNN: I have no further questions.

18 EXAMINATION

19 BY MR. COLEMAN:

20 Q I'll have a few follow-ups. We won't let
21 you -- we won't let you go too early but I think we'll
22 get you out of here in time for lunch.

23 Why don't we do this: Let me add another
24 exhibit that we can look at together.

25 A Okay.

1 Q Give me just a moment to upload it.

2 A You tell me when you've uploaded it and then
3 I'll refresh on this end.

4 Q Okay. It is uploading. It appears to have
5 completed.

6 A Okay.

7 Q I don't see the Exhibit C sticker. I'm not
8 sure why it didn't appear but it should be marked as
9 Exhibit C.

10 A Okay. Well, it's here.

11 Q Okay. Well, while you're taking a look at
12 it, let me -- I'll give you a second.

13 MR. COLEMAN: I'll just ask the court
14 reporter if it's possible afterwards to put the
15 exhibit sticker on. I must somehow not have
16 clicked the right button in the process but we
17 can fix that afterward.

18 THE COURT REPORTER: No problem.

19 (Exhibit C, E-Mail Chain, was marked for
20 identification.)

21 BY MR. COLEMAN:

22 Q Take a minute and look over that.

23 A Okay.

24 Q So this is a -- as a PDF it's a five-page
25 printout of an e-mail chain. If you scroll all the

1 way down to the original, the oldest e-mail, it starts
2 on Page 3. You see that?

3 A Yes.

4 Q This is the e-mail that you got from Sharon
5 Betts at Miracle Hill on Wednesday, May 1, 2019 in
6 response to the online application form you submitted
7 to Miracle Hill, right?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Look for me at the first full paragraph. It
10 starts off with the salutation, "Dear Ms. Welch and
11 Ms. Rogers," and then I'm going to read from that
12 first paragraph. "We appreciate your interest in
13 foster care and we hope we can help you find a way to
14 serve foster children in South Carolina." Did I read
15 that accurately?

16 A Yes, you did, except "Ms." should be
17 Mrs. and Mrs., but that was her error, not yours.

18 Q Okay. A second ago you said that when
19 Miracle Hill responded it was like they wouldn't even
20 consider your ability or your -- your fitness to be a
21 foster parent. It seems to me, they say: We
22 appreciate your interest and we hope we can help you
23 find a way to serve foster children. Right?

24 A Well, I'll clarify. They wouldn't consider
25 it with them.

1 Q Okay. If we look a little bit further down
2 in the second full paragraph, let me read the first
3 sentence there. I'll read the first two. "You stated
4 in your inquiry that you attend the Unitarian
5 Universalist Church and that you are in agreement with
6 our" -- meaning Miracle Hill -- "doctrinal statement.
7 The Unitarian Universalist Church, however, does not
8 align with traditional Christian doctrine and thereby
9 would not be considered a Christian church." Did I
10 read that accurately?

11 A Yes.

12 Q You and Eden are Unitarian Universalists,
13 right?

14 A Yes.

15 Q And I guess let me ask you --

16 A We go to that church. I don't know if that
17 makes us Unitarian Universalists but we go to that
18 church, yeah.

19 Q Okay. Would you -- would you disagree that
20 you're Unitarian Universalists?

21 A No.

22 Q And as I understand it from having looked
23 at -- looked at the Greenville Unitarian Universalist
24 Church website, its doctrinal statement, that sort of
25 thing, looking at the denominational -- the Unitarian

1 Universalist denominational website, it seems to me
2 that it diverges from Christianity in a number of
3 fairly significant ways; do you agree?

4 A I don't really know. I mean, I know that
5 anyone -- any religion can go there and feel at home
6 there. So I guess in that sense that they're open to
7 all religions then that would be different than a
8 Christian church.

9 Q In the sense --

10 A Like a purely only Christian church, I
11 guess.

12 Q Yeah. In the sense that -- I guess I'll --
13 to use the -- sort of a metaphor, the Unitarian
14 Universalist Church takes the viewpoint that there are
15 many different paths to the top of the mountain that
16 all lead to the same place; is that the idea?

17 A Yes, yes.

18 Q And that the Christian faith is a more
19 exclusive religion; it believes that there is only one
20 way to eternal life, salvation, new birth, heaven and
21 the afterlife and that sort of thing, right?

22 A Correct.

23 Q So if you've got one group that believes
24 there is only one way and another group that believes
25 no, any way will do, that those are not the same

1 thing?

2 A That's correct.

3 Q Okay. So it's not entirely surprising,
4 then, that Miracle Hill would say if you're a
5 Unitarian Universalist you're not a Christian who's
6 going to mesh well and be a good fit with our beliefs
7 which are -- that are Christian, that there is only
8 one way, right? That's kind of to be expected that --

9 A I don't -- I don't actually think -- I don't
10 agree with that, like, because they never asked if we
11 were Christian or not and if we -- and there are
12 Christians that go to Unitarian -- that Unitarian
13 church and they would believe the same thing, that
14 there's only one way as far as their beliefs go.

15 Q So let me see. Let me look back at that --
16 that e-mail.

17 So as we said a second ago, right,
18 they've -- they, Miracle Hill, in this e-mail has
19 identified that you attend the Unitarian Universalist
20 Church. You've agreed that that's where you go, that
21 that describes your -- that you are Unitarian
22 Universalists?

23 A Yes.

24 Q And in Miracle Hill's viewpoint, because
25 Unitarian Universalism as a doctrinal system, as a